

Focus On...

Information about your Health from the Directorate of Primary Care Services, Ft. Gordon, Georgia

Pityriasis Rosacea

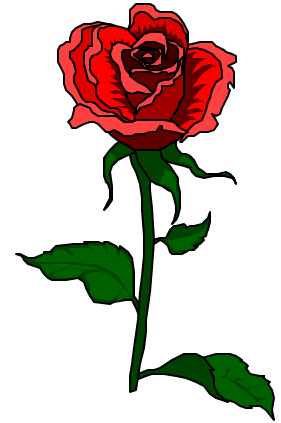
MAJ Niel A. Johnson, MD

What is pityriasis rosacea?

Pityriasis rosacea (*"pity-rye-ah-sis row-say-see-ah"*) is a common, benign, usually asymptomatic, distinctive self-limiting rash of unknown etiology.

What are the symptoms?

- asymptomatic for many people
- fatigue
- headache
- sore throat
- itchiness and irritation
- the rash:
 - 2-10 round, oval patches
 - the first spot is called the "herald" patch
 - redness, hence the term "*rosacea*"
 - central dryness or flakiness
 - lesions tend to follow skin lines
 - entire body surface can be affected



What causes pityriasis rosacea?

It is not known what exactly causes this rash. It does not appear to be related to infection or trauma. Autoimmune and environmental causes have been considered, but no direct connection has ever been made.

Is it contagious?

It is not considered to be contagious, although isolated reports of outbreaks in military barracks and fraternity houses have been made.

Does pityriasis rosacea cause cancer?

There is no evidence supporting this.

How is this rash diagnosed?

Usually all that is required is an examination of the skin. The rash has a fairly classic appearance familiar to your health care provider. Sometimes a scraping of a lesion is done to make sure it is not a fungal rash, which can appear very much like pityriasis rosacea. In more severe cases or cases not responding to the usual therapy, a biopsy can be done to find out more about the rash.

What is the treatment for pityriasis rosacea?

This common rash has a tendency to go away on its own without treatment. More severe cases can be treated with topical steroid creams. Exposure to direct sunlight will speeden its recovery, as will ultraviolet (UV) light therapy.

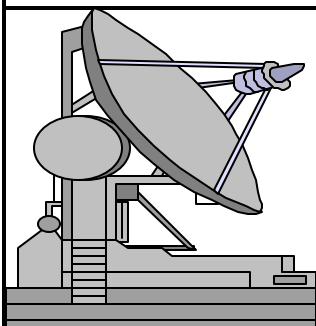
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It is important no resist the urge to scratch the rash as this may prolong its healing and increase the risk for infection. Oral diphenhydramine or Benadryl™ can be helpful in alleviating the itching sometimes associated with rashes like this.

For what reasons should I follow-up, call the clinic, etc.?

If you have pityriasis rosacea and it does not seem to improve after 4-6 weeks of therapy as described above, you should make an appointment to come in and have your rash looked at again. Other rashes, with other treatments, may be present and will require their specific treatment. A biopsy of the rash can be done to check for underlying skin characteristics which may lead to a more certain diagnosis.



This Patient Information Handout is produced by the Directorate of Primary Care Services, Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Ft. Gordon, GA.

Information is current and correct at the time of the last revision. This information sheet is not intended to replace an evaluation by a competent medical provider, but rather to supplement the treatment plan outlined by the patient's health care provider. Moreover, much of the information is intended to be of a general nature and it cannot be assumed that such information will necessarily apply to specific individuals. Opinions and facts do not necessarily reflect that of the United States Government or its subordinate agencies.

Questions, comments and corrections should be forwarded to:

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The Directorate of Primary Care Services

	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Appointments</u>	<u>Messages</u>
Connelly Signal Health Clinic	0600-1600*	787-7300	787-7360
Signal Health Care Clinic #4 (TMC #4)	0600-1600*	787-7300	787-7360
Main Family Practice Clinic	0600-2030	787-7300	787-7360
Internal Medicine Clinic	0800-1600*	787-7300	787-7360
Primary Care Clinic	0800-1600*	787-7300	787-7360

Medication Renewals 787-7360

Pharmacy Direct Refills 787-1710

Emergency Dept. Advice Line	787-5222/6727
Poison Control	1-800-282-5846
Outpatient Pharmacy	787-7010
Labor and Deliver @ MCG	721-2687
Emergency	dial 911
Information Desk @ EAMC	787-5811/4568
TriCare Information Hotline	1-800-333-5331

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Extended Hours Clinic is held at the Main FP Clinic, and is available for all the soldiers, retirees, and family members seen at any of the Directorate of Primary Care Clinics.